(iii) Staff have been briefed to prolong the conversation with the caller to facilitate tracing.

Bell Jet Ranger Helicopter installed under UNDP

2104. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Bell Jet Ranger Helicopter VT-DIP was installed under the United Nations Development Programme for conducting survey of forest resources;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there has been any agreement to transfer this helicopter from Vayudoot to M/s. Aparna Aviation on payment of rupees one lakh;

(d) if so, what are the terms on which it has been given to M/s. Aparna Aviation and in what manner the balance amount will be recovered from the company;

(e) whether the Pawan Hans Limited had demanded this helicopter before the agreement with M/s. Aparna Aviation; and

(f) if so, what are the reasons for not giving it to the Pawan Hans Limited?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Bell Jet Ranger helicopter VT-DIP was received by the Government of India under United Nations Development Programme assistance for pre-investment survey of forest resources. On completion of the project, the ownership of the helicopter was transferred in 1976 to the erstwhile Agro Aviation Division in the Ministry of Agriculture. The Agro Aviation Division was subsequently transferred to Vayudoot Limited. Accordingly, the helicopter came to Vayudoot.

(c) and (d) An agreement was signed between Vayudoot and M/s Aparna Aviation Pvt. Ltd. on 30th May, 1991 for the latter to take the helicopter on lease for one year. An advance of Rs. one lakh was received from the company. But the arrangement did not materialise due to premature failure in the engine of the helicopter. M/s Aparna Aviation was informed accordingly and the advance received was returned. No amount has to be recovered from them.

(e) and (f) Pawan Hans Ltd. requested Vayudoot for wet lease of helicopter but by that time Vayudoot had entered into the aforesaid agreement with M/s Aparna Aviation.

Setting up of Offices by DGCA to Monitor Operation of Air Taxi Operator

2105. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Directorate General of Civil Aviation propose to set up offices in New Delhi and Bombay to monitor the operations of the air-taxi operators;

(b) if so, what are the details about the functions of these offices;

(c) the names of other places where these offices are likely to be set up; and

(d) whether airworthiness of the aircrafts deployed by the taxi operators and safety aspects of these operations will be checked before these aircrafts are put into operation, if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) DGCA has offices at 14 places in India. These offices exercise regulatory control over airworthiness, operational and other related matters. Besides, two Safety Audit Teams have been constituted at Bombay and Delhi to conduct inspection of matters relating to air safety, security and maintenance of air taxis. These two teams carry out inspections not only at Delhi and Bombay but at other places also.

(d) Airworthiness and safety aspects of aircraft deployed by Air Taxi Operators are already being checked by the regulatory authority. Only aircraft having certificate of airworthiness are allowed to fly.

Issue of No Objection Certificate to Jet Airways

2106. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the MINISTER of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued a No Objection Certificate to Jet Airways to operate as an air taxi operator;

(b) if so, what are the terms and conditions;

(c) whether Jet Airways propose to have a tie up with Gulf Air and Kuwait Airways if so, on what terms and conditions; and

(d) what is the extent to which the interests of Indian Airlines and Air India will be affected by the operation of foreign air taxi operators?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The permit has been issued for operation of service under the air taxi guidelines contained in Aeronautical Information Circular No. 24 of 1990 and related instructions issued from time to time.

(c) M/s. Jet Airways have proposed that they may be owned by Tait Winds Ltd. a company incorporated in the Isle of Man where Gulf Air and Kuwait Airways may hold equity shares of 20% each and the balance would be held by Non-Resident Indian.

(d) Indian Airlines and Air India will face competition.

Civil Airport at Amreli, Gujarat

2107. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for establishing a civil airport at Amreli in Gujarat;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the construction of Airport Terminal building, runway and Taxi-Track has been completed;

(c) whether there is any proposal to operate daily flight directly between Bombay-Surat, Bhavnagar-Amreli;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) The airstrip at Amreli belongs to the Government of Gujarat. National Airports Authority has no plan at present to upgrade facilities at this airstrip.

(c) to (e) Due to Commercial and operational reasons Vayudoot has no plans at present to operate on Bombay-Surat, Bhavnagar-Amreli Sectors.

New Aviation Policy

2108. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce new aviation policy; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the steps Government propose to take to ensure safe air journey; proper maintenance of aircrafts and curb heavy expenditure.

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) A liberalised policy has been adopted on operations of air taxis: Open Sky Policy is in force on carriage of cargo by Indian and foreign air carriers and single window clearance system has been introduced for operation of tourist charters. A bill has also been introduced in the Lok Sabha to repeal the Air Corporations Act. 1953.

(b) Air India and Indian Airlines have adequate facilities for maintenance of their fleet. So far as air taxi operators are concerned, most of them have facilities for minor maintenance. Major maintenance is done either abroad or at Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.

Only aircrafts having certificate of airworthiness issued by Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) are allowed to fly.

Construction of Airport at Jalandhar

2109. SHRI BALBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state.

(a) whether Government propose to construct an airport at Jalandhar in view of the long-standing demand of Punjabi immigrants settled abroad;

(b) if so, when the construction is likely to commence; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) Due to commercial and financial constraints, National Airports Authority has no plan at present to construct an airport at Jalandhar.

International Flights from Amritsar

2110. SHRI BALBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government propose to start the international flights from Amritsar as normaley has returned to Punjab; and

(b) the details of the flights proposed to be started from Amritsar alongwith their frequencies?